

Molong Tragedy

ACCUSED ACQUITTED

The trial of Alfred Aksel Syrjalainen, 28, a native of Finland, on a charge of murdering Frank Carragher in the bar of the Freemason's Hotel, Molong, on February 13, was heard at Dubbo Circuit Court on Tuesday.

One witness said he heard deceased threaten accused after one shot had been fired.

Sergeant Boon, who made the arrest, stated that accused said he fired only to frighten Carragher.

Accused, giving evidence in his own defence, stated he was naturalised. He went to the war in 1914, and returned in August last. While in Sydney, after his return, he was three times molested and assaulted by roughs. He was advised by friends to buy a revolver to protect himself. He applied to the police at Pyrmont for a license to carry the firearm, but was told a license was not necessary. He was advised by the police to carry a revolver and fire if necessary to frighten his assailants. He purchased a rabbiting outfit with a countryman named Salminin, with whom he ar-

man named Salminin, with whom he arrived at Molong. On the day of the tragedy he was on the way home to camp when he was told that his mate was lying down drunk. He found his mate at the hotel. He shouted for all hands. Carragher then wanted him to shout for another man. He replied that his money was nearly gone. Carragher then abused him, and struck him as he turned to leave. Carragher was a big man, and accused a small man. Carragher continued to threaten him, and he drew his revolver and fired at the ceiling. Then Carragher rushed him, and he couldn't say how he fired the second shot.

Dr. Douglas, of Molong, stated the bullet took an upward course from the collarbone to the base of the skull.

The jury acquitted accused after two hours' retirement.